

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Drawings***

1. Drawings submitted on 09/10/2001 have been approved.

### ***Examiner's Amendment***

2. An Examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such amendment, it must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

3. Authorization for this Examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Luminita A. Todor (Reg. No. 57,639) on 03/28/2008.

4. The application has been amended as follows:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A witness system to assist a buyer and a seller after at least one sale operation has been agreed upon when an offer and acceptance have occurred, comprising:

confirmation document making means for making a confirmation document by the buyer for each one of a plurality of received seller records sent from the seller to the buyer, each seller record including sales data about one or more items sold by the seller to the buyer, the buyer generating a confirmation document corresponding to each seller record, and each confirmation document indicating a selected sale and

corresponding sales data of at least one item among the plurality of seller records;

witness receiving means for receiving each confirmation document from the buyer after the buyer makes each confirmation document;

confirmation means for confirming by the seller that the content of each of the seller records is in agreement with the content of a corresponding one of the confirmation documents sent to the seller from the witness receiving means, wherein said witness receiving means certifies and registers each confirmation document as being accurate once said confirmation means confirms each confirmation document; and memory means for storing in memory the confirmation documents registered by said witness receiving means, and

wherein the witness system responds to any subsequent inquiry of the buyer or the seller relative to the selected sale using the stored confirmation documents[.] 1

when said confirmation documents are sent from said seller to said witness receiving means, said documents are registered and the fact that said documents are registered is confirmed, and

when said contents do not agree, as determined according to said confirmation means, said witness receiving means is notified of the substantive disagreement.

2. (ORIGINAL) A witness system according to claim 1, wherein a buyer makes said confirmation documents.

3. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A witness system according to claim 1, wherein when

said witness receiving means confirms the confirmation documents, said witness receiving means notifies both the buyer and seller of the confirmation.

4-5. (CANCELLED).

6. (ORIGINAL) A witness system according to claim 1, wherein the storing in memory of said documents according to said memory means is undertaken with respect to each buyer and each seller.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An account settlement system, comprising:

notarization document making means for making a notarization document by a buyer for each one of a plurality of seller records sent from a seller to the buyer after at least one sale operation has been agreed upon when an offer and an acceptance have occurred, each seller record including sales data about one or more items sold by the seller to the buyer, the buyer making each notarization document upon receipt of each seller record, and each notarization document indicating a selected sale and corresponding sales data of at least one item among the plurality of seller records;

sending means for sending to a notarization authority each notarization from the buyer after the buyer makes each notarization document, and for sending each notarization document from the notarization authority to the seller;

confirmation means for confirming by the seller whether the contents of each seller record is in agreement with the contents of a corresponding one of the notification

documents;

a witness having the notarization authority and certifying that each notification document is accurate after the seller confirms that each seller record agrees with the corresponding notarization document;

memory means for storing in a memory the notarization documents certified by said witness;

detailed payment statement making means for making, with reference to the notarization documents stored in the memory, a detailed payment statement, upon which payment to the seller by the buyer is to be based;

funds transfer request means for requesting a transfer of funds, based on the detailed payment statement; and notification means for notifying said witness of a transfer of funds, when funds are transferred to the seller based on the funds transfer request, and

wherein the witness responds to any subsequent inquiry of the buyer or the seller relative to the selected sale using the stored confirmation documents[.] ۱

said detailed payment statement is made in accordance with payment terms and said payment terms are managed by said witness system.

8-9. (CANCELLED)

10. (ORIGINAL) An account settlement system using a witness system according to claim 7, wherein said seller checks said detailed payment statement against documents

stored in memory according to said memory means.

11. (ORIGINAL) An account settlement system utilizing a witness system according to claim 7, wherein making of said detailed payment statement is undertaken by said buyer.

12. (ORIGINAL) An account settlement system utilizing a witness system according to claim 7, wherein making of said detailed payment statement is undertaken by said witness.

13. (ORIGINAL) An account settlement system utilizing a witness system according to claim 12, wherein said buyer checks said detailed payment statement in accordance with documents stored in memory according to said memory means.

14. (ORIGINAL) An account settlement system utilizing the witness system according to claim 7, wherein when said witness system notarizes notarization documents, notification of said notarization is given to both the buyer and seller.

15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An account settlement system utilizing a witness system, comprising:

notarization document making means for making a notarization document by a seller for each one of a plurality of buyer records sent from a buyer to the seller, each

buyer record including sales data about one or more items sold by the buyer to the seller, the seller making each notarization document upon receipt of each buyer record, and each notarization document indicating a sale and corresponding sales data of at least one item among the plurality of seller records;

sending means for sending to a notarization authority each notarization from the seller after the seller makes each notarization document, and for sending each notarization document from the notarization authority to the buyer;

confirmation means for confirming by the buyer whether the contents of each buyer record is in agreement with the contents of a corresponding one of the notification documents;

a witness having the notarization authority and certifying that each notification document is accurate after the buyer confirms that each buyer record agrees with the corresponding notarization document;

memory means for storing in a memory the notarization documents certified by said witness;

detailed payment statement making means for making, by said buyer, with reference to the notarization documents stored in the memory, a detailed payment statement upon which a set-off payment by the seller to the buyer is based; and

request means for requesting a financial institution to issue a check to the buyer, based on the detailed payment statement[.] , wherein said detailed payment statement is made in accordance with payment terms and said payment terms are managed by said witness system.

16. (ORIGINAL) An account settlement system utilizing the witness system according to claim 15, wherein said financial institution notifies said witness when a check is issued based on said check issue request.

17. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An account settlement system utilizing a witness system, comprising:

notarization document making means for making a notarization document by a buyer for each one of a plurality of seller records sent from a seller to the buyer, each seller record including sales data about one or more items sold by the seller to the buyer, the buyer making each notarization document upon receipt of each seller record, and each notarization document indicating a selected sale and corresponding sales data of at least one item among the plurality of seller records;

sending means for sending to a notarization authority each notarization from the buyer after the buyer makes each notarization document, and for sending each notarization document from the notarization authority to the seller;

confirmation means for confirming by the seller whether the contents of each seller record is in agreement with the contents of a corresponding one of the notification documents;

a witness having the notarization authority and certifying that each notification document is accurate after the seller confirms that each seller record agrees with the corresponding notarization document;

memory means for storing in a memory the notarization documents certified by said witness;

detailed payment statement making means for making, with reference to the notarization documents stored in the memory, a detailed payment statement, upon which payment to the seller by the buyer is to be based; and

request means for requesting a financial institution to issue a note to the buyer[.],  
said detailed payment statement is made in accordance with payment terms and said payment terms are managed by said witness system.

18. (ORIGINAL) An account settlement system utilizing a witness system according to claim 17, wherein said witness is notified when said financial institution has issued a note based on said note issuance request.

19. (ORIGINAL) An account settlement system according to claim 7, wherein at the time said detailed payment statement is made, set-off processing is performed when said buyer is possessed of a receivable against said seller.

20. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A witness system according to claim 1, wherein said witness receiving means confirms in advance a buyer and a seller and utilizes an authentication certificate when performing any procedure.

21. (ORIGINAL) An account settlement system utilizing said witness system according



Art Unit: 3627

to claim 7, wherein said witness confirms in advance a buyer and a seller and utilizes an authentication certificate when performing any procedure.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A witness system according to claim 1, wherein data transmitted among said witness receiving means, buyer, and seller, are encoded.

23. (ORIGINAL) An account settlement system utilizing said witness system according to claim 7, wherein data transmitted among said witness, buyer, and seller, are encoded.

24. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A witness system according to claim 20, wherein said witness receiving means notarizes said transmitted data.

25. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for document confirmation by a witness system, comprising:

making a confirmatory document by a buyer for each one of a plurality of seller records sent from a seller to the buyer, each seller record including sales data about one or more items sold by the seller to the buyer, the buyer making each confirmatory document upon receipt of each seller record, and each confirmatory document indicating a selected sale and corresponding sales data of at least one item among the plurality of seller records;

sending to a witness each confirmatory document from the buyer after the buyer

makes each confirmatory document, and sending each confirmatory document from the witness to the seller;

confirming by the seller whether the contents of each seller record are in agreement with the contents of a corresponding one of the confirmatory documents;

certifying, by the witness, that each confirmatory document is accurate, and notifying the buyer and the seller of each certification; and

storing the certified documents in a memory[.]

when said confirmation documents are sent from said seller to said witness receiving means, said documents are registered and the fact that said documents are registered is confirmed, and

when said contents do not agree, as determined according to said confirmation means, said witness receiving means is notified of the substantive disagreement.

26. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An account settlement method utilizing a witness system, comprising:

making a notarization document by a buyer for each one of a plurality of seller records sent periodically from a seller to the buyer, each seller record including sales data about one or more items sold by the seller to the buyer, the buyer making each notarization document upon receipt of each seller record, and each notarization document indicating a selected sale and corresponding sales data of at least one item among the plurality of seller records;

sending to a notarization authority each notarization document from the buyer

after the buyer makes each notarization document, and sending each notarization document from the notarization authority to the seller;

confirming by the seller whether the contents of each seller record are in agreement with the contents of a corresponding one of the notarization documents;

notarizing, by a witness having the notarization authority, that each document is accurate and notifying the buyer and the seller of each notarization, after the seller confirms that each seller record agrees with the corresponding notarization document;

storing in a memory the notarized documents;

making, with reference to the stored notarization documents, a detailed payment statement upon which is based payment by the buyer to the seller; and

requesting the transfer of funds to the seller, based on the detailed payment statement[.] , wherein said detailed payment statement is made in accordance with payment terms and said payment terms are managed by said witness system.

27. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer-readable memory medium containing a program causing a computer to execute document confirmation processes performed by a witness system, and comprising a process of:

making a confirmatory document by a buyer for each one of a plurality of seller records sent from a seller to the buyer, each seller record including sales data about one or more items sold by the seller to the buyer, the buyer making each confirmatory document upon receipt of each seller record, and each confirmatory document indicating a selected sale and corresponding sales data of at least one item among the

plurality of seller records;

sending, to a witness, each confirmatory document from the buyer after the buyer makes each confirmatory document, and sending each confirmatory document from the witness to the seller;

confirming by the seller whether the contents of each seller record are in agreement with the contents of a corresponding one of the confirmatory documents;

certifying by the witness that each confirmatory document is accurate, and notifying the buyer and the seller of each certification, after the seller confirms that each seller record agrees with the corresponding confirmatory document; and

storing in a memory each certified document[.], wherein

when said confirmation documents are sent from said seller to said witness receiving means, said documents are registered and the fact that said documents are registered is confirmed, and

when said contents do not agree, as determined according to said confirmation means, said witness receiving means is notified of the substantive disagreement.

28. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer-readable memory medium containing a program causing a computer to execute an account settlement process using a witness system, and comprising a process of:

making a notarization document by a buyer for each one of a plurality of seller records sent from a seller to the buyer, each seller record including sales data about one or more items sold by the seller to the buyer, the buyer making each notarization

Art Unit: 3627

document upon receipt of each seller record, and each notarization document indicating a selected sale and corresponding sales data of at least one item among the plurality of seller records;

sending, to a notarization authority, each notarization document from the buyer after the buyer makes each notarization document, and sending each notarization document from the notarization authority to the seller;

confirming, by the seller, whether the contents of each seller record and the contents of a corresponding one of the notarization documents are in agreement;

notarizing, by a witness having the notarization authority, that each notarization document is accurate, and notifying the buyer and the seller of each notarization, after the seller confirms that each seller record agrees with the corresponding notarization document;

storing, in a memory, the notarized documents;

making, with reference to the notarized documents, a detailed payment statement upon which is based payment by the buyer to the seller; and

requesting that funds be transferred to the seller, based on the detailed payment statement[.] , wherein said detailed payment statement is made in accordance with payment terms and said payment terms are managed by said witness system.

29-37. (CANCELLED)

***Allowable subject matter***

5. Claims 1-3, 6-7, and 10-28 are allowed.
6. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:
7. The closest prior art of record is Walker et al., US Patent No. (5,794,207) and "the impact of EDI" by Stephen P. Kaufman, Electronic Buyers' News n 654, 15; Pub. Date June 12, 1989 referred to hereinafter as NPL.

Walker discloses a method and apparatus for buyers to communicate a binding purchase offer globally to potential sellers. Walker allows the seller who meets the term of the purchase offer to bind the buyer to accept the seller's fulfillment of that offer. In addition Walker discloses a system in which the identity of the buyer's is authenticated along with the integrity of the buyer's purchase offer.

NPL discloses an article regarding EDI which is the electronic interchange of standard business documents without human intervention. NPL discloses that with EDI a purchaser enters a bill of materials into his own company's computer system, and his and the supplier's computers do the rest, The customer's computer checks the supplier's inventory, pricing and delivery schedules and processes the order. The supplier's computer acknowledges the order, sends confirmation of delivery and sends an invoice and receives payment automatically.

The prior art of record does not disclose or suggest "confirmation document

making means for making a confirmation document by the buyer for each one of a plurality of received seller records sent from the seller to the buyer, each seller record including sales data about one or more items sold by the seller to the buyer, the buyer generating a confirmation document corresponding to each seller record, and each confirmation document indicating a selected sale and corresponding sales data of at least one item among the plurality of seller records; witness receiving means for receiving each confirmation document from the buyer after the buyer makes each confirmation document; wherein the witness system responds to any subsequent inquiry of the buyer or the seller relative to the selected sale using the stored confirmation documents[.] ۱

when said confirmation documents are sent from said seller to said witness receiving means, said documents are registered and the fact that said documents are registered is confirmed, and

when said contents do not agree, as determined according to said confirmation means, said witness receiving means is notified of the substantive disagreement.” As stated in independent claims 1, 25 and 27.

In addition the prior art does not disclose or suggest “notarization document making means for making a notarization document by a buyer for each one of a plurality of seller records sent from a seller to the buyer after at least one sale operation has been agreed upon when an offer and an acceptance have occurred, each seller record including sales data about one or more items sold by the seller to the buyer, the buyer making each notarization document upon receipt of each seller record, and each

Art Unit: 3627

notarization document indicating a selected sale and corresponding sales data of at least one item among the plurality of seller records; sending means for sending to a notarization authority each notarization from the buyer after the buyer makes each notarization document, and for sending each notarization document from the notarization authority to the seller” as recited in independent claims 7, 15, 17, 26 and 28. For these reason claims 1, 7, 15, 17, 25, 26, 27 and 28, are deemed to be allowable over the prior art of record, and claims 2-3, 6, 10-14, 16 and 18-24 are allowable by dependency.

Any comments considered necessary by Applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee, and to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled Comments on Statement of Reasons for allowance.

#### ***Contact Information***

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mussa A. Shaawat whose telephone number is 571-272-2945. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (8am-5:30pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Florian Zeender can be reached on 571-272-6790. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.



Art Unit: 3627

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Mussa Shaawat  
Patent Examiner  
April 7, 2008

/F. Ryan Zeender/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3627